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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/729,152	12/05/2003	Joseph William Lowry	AN18D1	1020

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EUSTATHIOS VASSILIOU  
TERMAX CORPORATION  
920 REMINGTON STREET  
SCHAUMBERG, IL 60173

EXAMINER

LUGO, CARLOS

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3676

DATE MAILED: 09/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/729,152

Applicant(s)

LOWRY ET AL.

Examiner

Carlos Lugo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 June 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 21-42, 45 and 46 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21-42, 45 and 46 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 June 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to applicant's amendment filed on June 9, 2004.
2. Applicant has to change the status of claims 6 and 10 as to be cancelled, as previously presented on the Preliminary Amendment filed on December 5, 2003. The present amendment fails to show the cancellation of claims 6 and 10. Appropriate correction is required.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) The invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. **Claims 21-25,28-36,39-42 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Pat No 5,447,005 to Giannuzzi.

Regarding claims 21 and 32, Giannuzzi discloses a spring fastener comprising a substantially flat head portion (10) comprising a first hole (11) and at least a lower side (10a and 10b).

The spring fastener further comprises a neck (12 and 13) having an opening and two side neck portions. The neck extends from the lower side of the substantially flat head portion at a substantially right angle with respect to the substantially flat head portion.

The spring fastener further comprises two substantially flat legs (19 and 20) extending from the neck. Each leg has inner surfaces that are at an initial proximity

with each other. The legs are expandable in opposite directions upon insertion through the first hole of an expansion member (23 and 24), thus bringing the expansion member to a contact region of the legs. Each leg also has side leg portions.

The spring fastener further comprises a funnel configuration (14) in the vicinity of the contact region.

And the spring fastener further comprises barbs (15 and 17). The barbs have a front point and an origin. The barbs comprise a proximal barb section starting from at the origin and being directed outwardly away from the side neck portion and the side leg portion respectively (15 is directed outwardly away from the side neck portion 12 and the side leg portion 19 respectively and 17 is directed outwardly away from the side neck portion 13 and the side leg portion 20 respectively).

Also, the barbs comprise a distal barb section ending at the front point and being directed inwardly toward the side neck portion and the side leg portion respectively (15 is directed inwardly toward the side neck portion 13 and the side leg portion 20 respectively and 17 is directed inwardly toward the side neck portion 12 and the side leg portion 19 respectively).

As to claims 22 and 33, Giannuzzi discloses that the head portion of the fastener comprises an upper side.

As to claims 23 and 34, Giannuzzi discloses that the head portion of the fastener has a single side corresponding to the lower side (Figure 7).

As to claims 24 and 35, Giannuzzi discloses that the first hole is substantially round.

As to claims 25 and 36, Giannuzzi discloses that the hole is comprises an oblong opening (Figure 4).

As to claims 28-30 and 39-41, Giannuzzi discloses that the first hole (11) is engageable to the expansion member (23 and 24).

As to claims 31 and 42, Giannuzzi discloses that the proximal and distal barb sections have an angle, which angle is adequately large to allow the fastener to be removed from the first part without destruction of said fastener or said first part, when the removal takes place solely from the side of the first part, wherein the head of the fastener is positioned.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. **Claims 26,27,37 and 38 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat No 5,447,005 to Giannuzzi, as applied to claims 21 and 32 above, and further in view of US Pat No 6,379,092 to Patel et al (Patel).

Giannuzzi fails to disclose that the fastener comprises an elastic body molded at least under the at least lower side of the head of the fastener.

Patel teaches that is known in the art to have a molded elastic body (7).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a molded elastic body, as taught by Patel, into a device as described by Giannuzzi, in order to give a sealing protection against the environment where the fastener is used.

7. **Claims 45 and 46 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat No 5,447,005 to Giannuzzi in view of US Pat No 6,709,210 to Lowry et al (Lowry '210).

Giannuzzi discloses a spring fastener comprising a substantially flat head portion (10) comprising a first hole (11) and at least a lower side (10a and 10b).

The spring fastener further comprises a neck (12 and 13) having an opening and two side neck portions. The neck extends from the lower side of the substantially flat head portion at a substantially right angle with respect to the substantially flat head portion.

The spring fastener further comprises two substantially flat legs (19 and 20) extending from the neck. Each leg has inner surfaces that are at an initial proximity with each other. The legs are expandable in opposite directions upon insertion through the first hole of an expansion member (23 and 24), thus bringing the expansion member to a contact region of the legs. Each leg also has side leg portions.

The spring fastener further comprises a funnel configuration (14) in the vicinity of the contact region.

And the spring fastener further comprises barbs (15 and 17). The barbs have a front point and an origin. The barbs comprise a proximal barb section starting from at the origin and being directed outwardly away from the side neck portion and the side leg portion respectively (15 is directed outwardly away from the side neck portion 12 and the side leg portion 19 respectively and 17 is directed outwardly away from the side neck portion 13 and the side leg portion 20 respectively).

Also, the barbs comprise a distal barb section ending at the front point and being directed inwardly toward the side neck portion and the side leg portion respectively (15 is directed inwardly toward the side neck portion 13 and the side leg portion 20 respectively and 17 is directed inwardly toward the side neck portion 12 and the side leg portion 19 respectively).

Giannuzzi fails to disclose that the fastener is used in combination with a vehicle.

Lowry '210 teaches that is known in the art to have a similar spring fastener used in a vehicle.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the fastener in a vehicle, as taught by Lowry '210, into a device as described by Giannuzzi, because the fact where is going to be used the fastener does not affect the mechanism of it.

### ***Response to Arguments***

8. Applicant's arguments filed June 9, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding applicant's arguments that Giannuzzi fails to disclose barbs (Page 5, line 12), Giannuzzi discloses this limitation (elements 15 and 17).

As to applicant's arguments that, as now amended, the invention requires that the barbs comprise a proximal barb section directed outwardly and a distal barb section directed inwardly all the time (Page 5 Line 17), Giannuzzi discloses this limitation (15 is directed inwardly toward the side neck portion 13 and the side leg portion 20 respectively and 17 is directed inwardly toward the side neck portion 12 and the side leg portion 19 respectively).

As to applicant's arguments that the instant invention requires that the barbs originate from a region selected from the side neck portion and the side leg portion (Page 5, line 21), Giannuzzi illustrates that the barbs 15 and 17 are originated from a region selected from the side neck portion (either 12 and 13) and the side leg portion (19 or 20).

### ***Conclusion***

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the



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mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Carlos Lugo whose telephone number is 703-305-9747. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-6pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on 703-308-2686. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-306-5771.



Carlos Lugo  
AU 3676

July 20, 2004.



DANIEL P. STODOLA  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600